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ABSTRACT

This study analyzes the content of journal articles and books dealing with the school principalship. The articles were listed in "Education Index" and published from 1970 through 1973; the books were listed in the 1973 "Books in Print." A content analysis research method is used to determine the principal's functions in school community relations and to indicate similar and unique functions at various school levels. Principal behavior is classified according to cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains. Frequency tables present the data. The study reveals 48 separate functions in school community relations. (DW)

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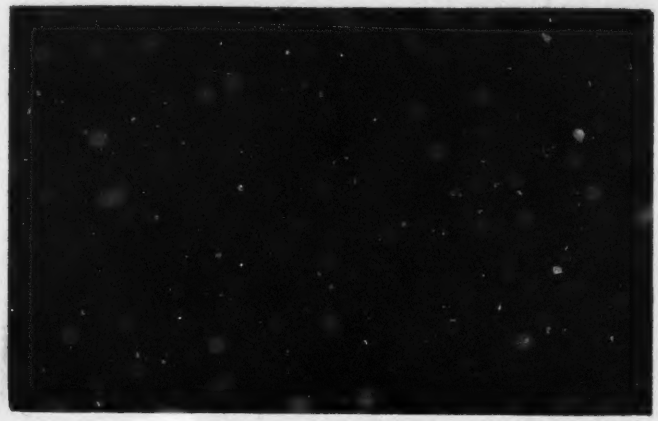

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The Public School Principal's Function in School-Community Relations as Defined by Content Analysis of Periodicals and Books[1]

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Additional studies of the principalship are available by writing the authors at Holton Hall, Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kansas 66506.

[1]This is one of a series of papers on the principal's function as derived from authors of books and periodical articles from 1970 through 1973.

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INTRODUCTION

Since 1916 when the Department of Secondary School Principals was organized[1] (The Department of Elementary School Principals was established in 1920[2]), various concepts have been formulated concerning the expected performance of school principals. The divergent expectations of the principal have been reported by, among others, Horowitz, et. al.[3], Sergiovanni and Carver[4], Chase[5], and Miklos[6]. Goldhammer[7] seems to summarize the results when he states that the position of the principal is uncertain and ambiguous.

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[1]Paul B. Jacobson, James D. Logsdon, and Robert R. Wiegman, The Principalship: New Perspectives (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1973), p. 19.

[2]Ibid., p. 34.

[3]Myer Horowitz, Gary J. Anderson, and Dorothy N. Richardson, "Divergent Views of the Principal's Role: Expectations Held by Principals, Teachers and Superintendents," The Alberta Journal of Educational Research, XV (December, 1969), p. 195.

[4]Thomas J. Sergiovanni and Fred D. Carver, The New School Executive (New York: Dodd, Mead and Co., 1973), pp. 175-176.

[5]F. S. Chase, "How to Meet Teachers' Expectations of Leadership," Administrator's Notebook, 1 (July, 1953), 2-3.

[6]E. Miklos, "Dimension of Conflicting Expectations and the Leader Behavior of Principals" (unpublished Doctor's dissertation, University of Alberta, 1963), p. 7.

[7]Keith Goldhammer and Gerald L. Becker, "What Makes a Good Elementary School Principal?" American Education, Volume 6, No. 3 (April, 1970), p. 11.

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THE PROBLEM

While an analysis of more than 50 studies on the principalship reported in Dissertation Abstracts reveals divergent conceptions of the principal's role,[8] no thorough single analysis was found concerning how the principal functions. In addition, there was no evidence in the research indicating whether or not the functions are similar for elementary, middle school, junior and senior high school principals. The need for such analysis is urgently required at a time when educators are reorganizing the school systems and universities are redeveloping their training programs.

PURPOSES AND OBJECTIVES

It was the purpose of the study to determine what differences, if any, existed in the function of the public school principalship in school community relations, as derived from periodicals from 1970 through 1973.

The objectives of the study were:

1. To make a content analysis of the elementary, middle, junior and senior high school principals' function in school community relations as delineated by the authors in periodicals published from 1970 through 1973 and books listed in the 1973 Books in Print.

2. To indicate the functions in school community relations were similar for each of the above mentioned levels of administration.

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[8]Stephen P. Hencley, Lloyd E. McCleary, and J. H. McGrath, The Elementary School Principalship (New York: Dodd, Mead and Co., 1970), p. 6.

3. To indicate what function in school community relations were unique to a particular level of administration, i.e., elementary, middle, junior and senior high school.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study was confined to a content analysis of journals published from 1970 through 1973, and books listed in the 1973 edition of Books in Print, which dealt with the function of the public school principalship in the United States. The periodicals were limited to those published in the United States and listed in the Education Index. No attempt was made to include lectures or essays unless these were included in a periodical or book.

METHOD OF STUDY

Content analysis was the research method used in this study. The content variables or categories used were selected from works by Ocker[9], Melton[10] and Snyder[11] with selected categories being added. In addition, each time a behavior was classified under one of the categories it was also considered in a two-dimensional way. First, the behavior wa classified as pert ining to elemertary, middle, junior or high school. When no particular school level was indicated for a given behavior, the variable was coded under the classification

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[9]Sharon Dale Ocker, "An Analysis of Trends in Educational Administration," unpublished Ed.D. dissertation, University of Nebraska Teachers College, 1967.

[10]Joseph Melton, "Perceptions of the Ideal and Actual Role of the Elementary School Principalship," unpublished Ed.D. dissertation, Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan, 1958.

[11]Willard S. Snyder, "Elementary School Principal's Perceptions of his Ideal and Actual Role," unpublished Ed.D. dissertation, United States International University, California Western Division, California, 1968.

"Not Determined". Second, the behavior was classified as pertaining to the Cognitive, Affective or Psychomotor Domains.

No effort was made to tally the frequency with which particular categories of content occurred in a given publication after the initial recording had been made unless the category referred to a different level in the cognitive or affective domain of schooling. The cognitive levels are those defined by Bloom, et al.[12] The affective levels and definitions are those used by Krathwohl, et al.[13] The psychomotor domain is that defined by Harrow[14].

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[12]Benjamin S. Bloom, et al., eds., Taxonomy of Educational Objectives, Handbook I: Cognitive Domain (New York: David McKay Company, Inc., 1956), p. 15.

[13]Anita J. Harrow, A Taxonomy of the Psychomotor Domain (New York: David McKay Company, Inc., 1972).

[14]David R. Krathwohl, Benjamin S. Bloom, and Bertram B. Mosia, Taxonomy of Educational Objectives, Handbook II: Affective Domain (New York: David McKay Company, Inc., 1964), p. 6.

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ANALYSIS OF THE PRINCIPAL'S FUNCTION IN SCHOOL-COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Periodical Articles

A study of Table 1 reveals that a grand total of 48 tallies were assigned to this principal's function in school-community relations. Of this number, 14 (29.2 percent) were coded for the elementary school level, zero for both the middle school and junior high school, 16 (33.3 percent) for the high school, and 18 (37.5 percent) were coded as "not determined," i.e., not referring to any particular level.

After one has examined the categories which comprise this function, it becomes difficult to understand why the authors of periodical articles which were published from 1970 through 1973 and which dealt with the principal's function, had nothing to write specifically about the middle school and junior high school principal's function in school-community relations. Many school principals have had the responsibility of interpreting the school program, of determining community expectations of the school, and of communicating with the parents. However, the need of fulfilling this responsibility is even greater when a new approach to educating children (the middle school) is being introduced and an older form of education (the junior high school) is being attacked by the critics.

In addition to classifying each of the 48 variables according to level of schooling, each of the variables was also classified as denoting a behavior belonging to one of the subcategories of the cognitive, affective, or psychomotor domains.

Table 1. An Analysis of Journal Articles Denoting the Principal's Functions in School-Community Relations.

Level	Total No. Tallies	Percentage Total Tallies
Elementary School	14	29.2
Middle School	0	0.0
Junior High School	0	0.0
High School	16	33.3
Not Determined	18	37.5
Total	48	100.0
	Cognitive Domain	
Level 1 (Knowledge)	13	92.9
Level 2 (Comprehension)	0	0.0
Level 3 (Application)	1	7.1
Level 4 (Analysis)	0	0.0
Level 5 (Synthesis)	0	0.0
Level 6 (Evaluation)	0	0.0
Total	14	100.0
	Affective Domain	
Level 1 (Receiving)	6	17.7
Level 2 (Responding)	14	41.1
Level 3 (Valuing)	12	35.3
Level 4 (Organization)	0	0.0
Level 5 (Characterization)	2	5.9
Total	34	100.0
	Psychomotor Domain	
Total	0	0.0

Table 1 indicates that a total of 14 of these variables were classified among the subcategories of the cognitive domain, 34 among the subcategories of the affective domain and none was classified in the psychomotor domain. The percentage assigned to the affective domain is in excess of three times the percentages assigned to the cognitive domain for this function.

Table 1 also indicates the manner in which the 36 variables assigned to the cognitive domain were distributed among its subcategories. An examination of Table 5 reveals that 92.9 percent of them to the knowledge level.

For the case of the 34 variables classified among the subcategories of the affective domain, 6 (17.7 percent) of them were assigned to level 1 (receiving) 14 (41.1 percent) to level 2 (responding); 12 (35.3 percent) to level 3 (valuing); 0 to level 4 (organization); and 2 (5.9 percent) to level 5 (characterization).

A total of 14 variables were tallied for category 3-1 (interpreting school program to the community). These variables were tallied as follows: three for the elementary school level, four for the high school level, and seven for the "not determined" level.

The nine variables tallied for category 3-2 (determining community expectations of the school) were rather evenly distributed among the levels, also. Three variables were assigned to the elementary school level, two to the high school level, and four to the "not determined" level.

Table 2. The Principal's Function in School-Community Relationships through Periodical Analysis.

Subcategory	Level of Schooling				
	Elementary	Middle School	Junior High	High School	Not determined
3-1 Interpreting school program to community	3			4	7
3-2 Determining community expectations of school	3			2	4
3-3 Communicating with parents				3	1
3-3a Bulletins	1				
3-3b Radio and television				1	
3-3c Parent conferences	1				
3-3d Pupils	2				
3-3e Other methods	1				
3-5 PTA and related groups				1	2
3-9 Special publicity campaigns				1	
3-11 Appraisal of school-community relations				1	1
3-12 Improving relations with business and industry					1
3-13 Improving relations with community organizations	1				
3-14 Miscellaneous	2			3	2
Total	14	0	0	16	18

Category 3-3 (communicating with parents) is one which does not specify any particular techniques for communicating with parents. It is interesting to note that of the four variables tallied, three of them were assigned to the high school level while the remaining one was assigned to the "not determined" level. However, out of the six variables which were assigned to the categories which dealt with particular methods or techniques of the school's communicating with parents, five of them were assigned to the following categories at the elementary level: category 3-3a (bulletins); 3-3c (parent conferences); 3-3d (pupils) and 3-3e (other methods). The sole variable assigned to the high school level was tallied for category 3-3b (radio and television). Scant attention was paid by the writers as regards the principal's function in communicating with parents and the principal's use of the various methods of communication.

Only three variables were tallied for category 3-5 (PTA and related groups). Two of these were assigned to the "not determined" level and one to the high school level.

One variable was tallied for category 3-9 (special publicity campaigns) and the variable was assigned to the high school level. The need to regularly make an appraisal of school-community relations was the content of category 3-11. Two variables were tallied for this category, one of which was assigned to the high school level; the other, to the "not determined" level.

Two variables were tallied for categories 3-12 (improving relations with business and industry) and 3-13 (improving relations with community organizations). The variable for the first mentioned category was assigned to the "not determined" level; the second one, to the elementary school level.

At a time when some schools are becoming more open to the public and some parents are being welcomed to visit their child's school, it is surprising that nothing was written by the authors about this point (category 3-4) and the principal's function relative to it.

Principals may need to know how to identify the various types of critics and how to handle them. Yet, the principal's function in this area of school-community relations (category 3-6) was not touched upon by any writer.

Some principals have an important function to perform in helping new teachers acquire public relations skills which will aid them in their relationships with the community (category 3-7), yet nothing was written in that area. The principal's function in planning home visitations both for himself and for his teachers (category 3-8, 3-8a, 3-8b) was also not mentioned in any of the periodical articles.

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Book Analysis

Table 3 reveals that a total of 26 tallies were coded for the principal's function in school-community relations through book analysis. Of this number, 11 (42.3 percent) were coded for the elementary school level, zero for both the middle school and junior high school levels, 8 (30.8 percent) for the high school level and 7 (26.9 percent) for the "not determined" level.

Besides classifying the 26 variables assigned to the principal's function in school-community relations according to level of schooling, each variable was classified as denoting psychomotor behavior, affective behavior, or cognitive behavior. Table 3 shows how the variables were assigned to the levels of the various domains. For the six levels of the cognitive domain, two of the 15 variables (13.3 percent) were classified in level 1 (knowledge), 10 (66.7 percent) in level 2 (comprehension), zero in level 3 (application) and in level 4 (analysis), three (20.0 percent) in level 5 (synthesis) and zero in level 6 (evaluation)

Eleven variables (42.3 percent of the total variables) were assigned to the affective domain. Two of the 11 variables (18.2 percent) were classified in level 1 (receiving), eight (72.7 percent) in level 2 (responding), one (9.1 percent) in level 3 (valuing), and zero in levels 4 (organization) and 5 (characterization).

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Table 3. An Analysis of Selected Books Denoting the Principal's Function in School-Community Relations from 1970 through 1973.

Level	Total No. Tallies	Percentage Total Tallies
Elementary School	11	42.3
Middle School	0	0.0
Junior High School	0	0.0
High School	8	30.8
Not Determined	7	26.9
Total	26	100.0
Cognitive Domain		
Level 1 (Knowledge)	2	13.3
Level 2 (Comprehension)	10	66.7
Level 3 (Application)	0	0.0
Level 4 (Analysis)	0	0.0
Level 5 (Synthesis)	3	20.0
Level 6 (Evaluation)	0	0.0
Total	15	100.0
Affective Domain		
Level 1 (Receiving)	2	18.2
Level 2 (Responding)	8	72.7
Level 3 (Valuing)	1	9.1
Level 4 (Organization)	0	0.0
Level 5 (Characterization)	0	0.0
Total	11	100.0
Psychomotor Domain		
Total	0	0.0

Table 4 shows how the 26 variables which were assigned to the principal's function in school-community relations were distributed among the various levels of schooling. More than half of the variables were concentrated among three of the categories; namely, category 3-1 (interpreting school program to the community), category 3-5 (PTA and related groups), category 3-13 (improving relations with community organizations). Six variables were tallied for the principal's function in interpreting the school program to the community. Three of the variables were assigned to the elementary school level, two to the high school level, and one to the "not determined" level. Four variables were tallied for the principal's function in dealing with the PTA and other related groups. Three of the variables were assigned to the elementary school level and one to the "not determined" level. Four variables were also tallied for the principal's function in improving relations with community organizations. Two of the three variables were assigned to the elementary school level and one each to the high school and "not determined" level.

The two variables tallied for category 3-2 (determining community expectations of the school) were both assigned to the high school level. In both instances, the writers said that the principal must know the views of the community about the schools and learn what the community expects of the schools.

Two variables each were tallied for category 3-3b (communicating with parents using other methods). In both cases the variables were assigned to the same levels of schooling: the high school level and the "not determined" level.

Table 4. The Principal's Function in School-Community Relations Assigned by Subcategories to Levels of Schooling from 1970 through 1973.

	Subcategory	Level of Schooling				
		Elementary	Middle School	Junior High	High School	Not determined
3-1	Interpreting school program to community	3			2	1
3-2	Determining community expectations of the school				2	
3-3b	Communicating with parents - radio and relevision				1	1
3-3e	Communicating with parents - other methods				1	1
3-4	Parent visits to school	1				1
3-5	PTA and related groups	3				1
3-6	School critics				1	
3-7	New teachers and community relations	1				
3-9	Special publicity campaigns	1				
3-13	Improving re ations with community organizations	2			1	1
3-14	Miscellaneous					1
	Total	11	0	0	8	7

There were two variables tallied for category 3-4 (parent visits to school) one of which was assigned to the elementary school level and the other to the "not determined" level. One author stated that the principal should hold an occasional night session of the regularly scheduled daytime classes in order to get more parents to visit the school. Another writer emphasized that the principal must be alert not to develop the kind of relationship where the parent keeps coming back just to have someone with whom to talk.

Only one variable was tallied for category 3-6 (school critics). The variable was assigned to the high school level. For this instance, the writer stressed that the principal must serve as an advocate for people who are criticizing the very school structure or policies he has helped to create and which he administers.

One variable each was tallied and assigned to the elementary school level for the principal's function in coping with new teachers and community relations (category 3-7) and his function in administering special publicity campaigns. According to one of the authors, during the school year the principal should bring to light unusual skills and experiences of the new teachers through newspaper publicity. Another writer said that the function of the principal includes efforts to bring the schools and the community into better working relationships.

No author of the analysed books in considering the principal's function in school-community relations dealt with his responsibility in the following areas: communicating with parents by means of parent conferences (category 3-3e); bulletins (category 3-3a); pupils

(category 3-3d); home visitations in general (category 3-8); home visitations by the teachers (category 3-8c); or home visitations by the principal (category 3-8b). Nothing was mentioned about his function in dealing with student publications (category 3-10) or in improving relations with business and industry (category 3-12). Finally, not one author of the analyzed books discussed the principal's function in making an appraisal of school-community relations.

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